

moulding material exhibiting a variation of mechanical properties in a direction at right angles to a surface of the capping layer, characterized in that **said variation of the mechanical properties comprises a continuous increase in hardness of the capping layer**" (emphasis added). Claim 11 includes a similar feature.

Matsumoto, as admitted by the Examiner, fails to disclose the capping layer comprising a "foam-forming reactive injection-moulding material" (Office Action, page 3, lines 3-4). Applicants agree. Applicants also submit that Matsumoto does not teach, suggest, or recognize the advantages provided by forming a capping layer using a material exhibiting a continuous variation of mechanical properties in a direction at right angles to a surface of the capping layer, wherein the "variation of the mechanical properties comprises a continuous increase in hardness of the capping layer." Indeed, throughout the prosecution of the above-referenced patent application, the Examiner has failed to provide any evidence supporting the allegation that the capping layer in Matsumoto inherently "exhibits a variation of mechanical properties" as claimed.

The Examiner relies on Prescott as allegedly teaching the claimed capping layer comprising a foam-forming reactive injection-moulding material. Applicants submit that Prescott also fails to teach, suggest, or recognize the advantages provided by the claimed "foam-forming reactive injection-moulding material exhibiting a variation of mechanical properties in a direction at right angles to a surface of the capping layer, characterized in that said variation of the mechanical properties comprises a continuous increase in hardness of the capping layer." On the contrary, Prescott merely discloses (see, e.g., col.

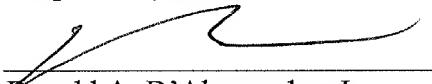
3, lines 33-40) that the foam, when fully cured, "is rigid, has a low density, exhibits good strength and is virtually chemically inert." Thus, not only does the cited art fail to teach or suggest a foam-forming reactive injection-moulding material exhibiting a continuous variation in mechanical properties, but the cited art also fails to teach or suggest that the variation comprises a continuous variation in the hardness of the capping layer.

Accordingly, in view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 8 and 11-14 are allowable.

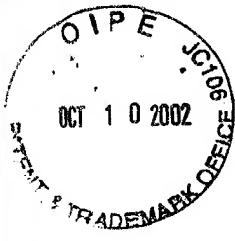
If the Examiner believes that anything further is necessary to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated:


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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Friedl et al.) Examiner: Dinh, T.
Application No.: 09/024,637)
Filed: 02/17/1998)
For: SYNTHETIC RESIN CAPPING LAYER)
ON A PRINTED CIRCUIT)

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SEPARATE MARKUP SHEET

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 8 and 11 to appear as set forth below.

8. (Four-Times Amended) A printed circuit which is provided with a synthetic resin capping layer, said circuit comprising a printed circuit board having at least one electric component, and the capping layer comprising a foam-forming reactive injection-moulding material exhibiting a variation of mechanical properties in a direction at right angles to a surface of the capping layer, characterized in that said variation of the mechanical properties [is a continuous variation] comprises a continuous increase in hardness of the capping layer.

11.(Twice Amended) A mobile telephone comprising a housing in which a printed circuit is arranged, characterized in that the printed circuit is provided with a synthetic resin capping layer having a continuously varying hardness and comprising a foam-forming

reactive injection-moulding material which constitutes the housing of the mobile telephone.